

REMARKS

The Office Action mailed on March 31, 2009 has been received and its contents carefully considered.

In this Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1, 2, 5 and 6. Claim 1 is the independent claim, and claims 1-11 are pending in the application. For at least the following reasons, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

The Office Action objects to drawings for informalities.

The objection is respectfully traversed. Although Fig. 6 shows another embodiment of the invention, the reference numerals 1-8 in Fig. 6 are respectively used to specify the same features as identified by reference numerals 1-8 in Figs. 1-5. It is thus submitted that the rejection should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 5, 6 and 11 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Sekine (JP 2001-254755), and rejects claims 2-4 and 7-10 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sekine.

Claim 1 has been amended. Amended claim 1 is directed to a universal joint yoke formed by press-forming a sheet, which includes a pair of tabs, each of which is formed of a flat plate extending in parallel to a predetermined axis, and has a first end portion, a second end portion, and an intermediate portion

disposed between the first and second end portions. Each tab has a through hole formed in the second end portion by piercing for inserting a corresponding trunnion of a joint cross therethrough. The universal joint yoke also includes a coupling portion of an annular form enclosing the predetermined axis, and a cylindrical portion extending from the coupling portion. The cylindrical portion couples the first end portions of the pair of tabs in a U-shape, has a center axis extending along the predetermined axis, is united to a shaft, and includes a slit extending in an axial direction of the cylindrical portion. The universal joint yoke further includes a pair of relief recesses respectively formed on inside surfaces of the pair of tabs, and a columnar relief space defined by the pair of relief recesses between the pair of tabs. Each relief recess is disposed from the second end portions to the intermediate portions of a respective tab, and communicates with a corresponding through hole of a respective one of the tabs. The relief space has a center axis extending along the predetermined axis, and serves as a relief when the joint cross is introduced between the pair of tabs from a side of the second end portions.

Sekine is related to a yoke of a lightweight universal joint. The Office Action seems to equate the arm portions 2 and 2' of *Sekine* to the pair of tabs in claim 1, equate the relief 13 of *Sekine* to the relief recesses in claim 1, and equate the bearing hole 6 of *Sekine* to the through hole in claim 1. However, in *Sekine*, the relief 13 is formed at the tip end of each of the arms 2, 2' for making the spider 17 (Fig. 3) easy to be inserted into the bearing hole 6, and is formed in the

approximate circle arc shape centering on the axis of the serration hole 5. Although the relief 13 is not illustrated, the relief 13 may be of a rectangle or elliptical shape (FIG. 5 and paragraph [0015]). In other words, as also illustrated in Fig. 1, reliefs 13 in *Sekine* are formed at the corners of the tip end of the arms 2 and 2', and are not in communication with the bearing hole 6. This is in contrast with the claimed invention, which includes "a pair of relief recesses which are respectively formed on inside surfaces of the pair of tabs and disposed from the second end portions to the intermediate portions of the pair of tabs, each relief recess communicating with a corresponding through hole of a respective one of the tabs." Although *Sekine* also discloses chamfers 14 and 14' provided in the inner side edges of the arms 2 and 2', and continued in the middle of the length direction from near the base ends of arms 2 and 2', the chamfers 14 and 14' are the reliefs for taking the folding angle of the universal joint, and are not in communication with the bearing hole 6, either (FIG. 5 and paragraph [0015]).

Therefore, *Sekine* does not disclose, teach or suggest all of the features recited in claim 1. Claim 1 thus cannot be anticipated or otherwise rendered unpatentable by *Sekine*.

Claims 2-11 ultimately depend from claim 1. Hence, they are patentable over *Sekine* for at least the reasons advanced above as to the patentability of claim 1. It is thus submitted that the rejections to claims 2-11 should be reconsidered and withdrawn.

Based on the above, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance and such a Notice earnestly is solicited.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

No fee is believed due. Should any fee be required, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee to our Deposit Account No. 18-0002, and is requested to advise us accordingly.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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AMENDMENT

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